

Appl. No. : 10/602,796
Filed : June 24, 2003

REMARKS

Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, Claims 6-15, 19, 29 and 30 remain pending. Claims 1-5, 16-18 and 20-28 have been canceled without prejudice to accelerate the allowance of this application. Applicant reserves the right to pursue these canceled claims in a continuation application. New Claims 29 and 30 have been added.

Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 6-15 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Aschenbeck (US 4693357) in view of Pepiciello (US 3946846), further in view of Wenner (US 4591042) and still further in view of Dobbins (US 6929110).

Aschenbeck et al. discloses a multiple-chute coin mechanism. The coin mechanism (20) includes a gate (22) "pivotally mounted above first and second downwardly directed rectangular chutes (24) and (26)." Col. 5, lines 38-40. The gate (22) pivots so as to direct coins into one of the two chutes (24, 26). See Figure 1; col. 5, lines 53-63. The chutes (24, 26) are pivotally mounted at their upper ends. See Col. 6, lines 32-33; col. 8, lines 21-22; Figure 1. The chutes (24, 26) are connected by a sliding hinge (146) and a chute spring (154) that "provides for restricted horizontal movement of the chutes (24, 26) with respect to each other." Col. 8, lines 41-55; Figures 1, 4. "The chute spring (154) is configured to somewhat restrict independent motion of the chutes (24, 26) with respect to each other, and to some what restrict the movement of the chutes (24, 26) in tandem with respect to the other parts of the coin mechanism (20) while the coin mechanism (20) is shaken to alleviate shingling of coins, jamming, etc." Col. 8, lines 55-61; Figures 1, 4 (emphasis added).

Dobbins discloses a coin chute with an upper cover 601 and upper slide 602 that are interconnected with a hinge arrangement 612. See Dobbins, col. 10 at lines 40-42; Figures 11 and 12. "This arrangement allows oversized coins, foreign objects, or bent coins to be cleared from the coin chute by moving coin clearing tab 650." Dobbins, col. 10 at lines 42-44. "A small angle (sic) at tab 650 allows sufficient separation between these parts to release jams (sic) coins." Dobbins, col. 10 at lines 47-48.

However, Aschenbeck does not teach or suggest, among other things, a coin drop mechanism comprising "an actuation member configured to protrude through the actuator opening in the support member and transmit an actuation force from the user onto the coin to

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press the at least one coin disposed in the desired location against the channel member upon actuation of the coin mechanism to pivotally displace the channel member relative to the support member," as recited, among other limitations in amended Claim 6. Instead, Aschenbeck discloses that the sliding hinge (146) and chute spring (154) allow for restricted independent movement of the chutes (24, 26) relative to each other "while the coin mechanism (20) is shaken to alleviate shingling of coins, jamming, etc." Likewise, Dobbins discloses clearing "oversized coins, foreign objects, or bent coins" from "the coin chute by moving coin clearing tab 650." Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 6 is allowable over Aschenbeck et al, alone or in combination with the cited references. Claims 7-15 depend from amended Claim 6 and are therefore likewise allowable over Aschenbeck, alone or in combination with the cited references, not only because these claims depend from an allowable base claim, but also because each of these claims recites a unique combination of features not taught in the cited art.

Applicant has also amended Claim 19 to recite, among other limitations, "an actuation member configured to protrude through the actuator opening in the support member and engage transmit an actuation force from the user onto the coin to press the at least one coin disposed in the desired location against the channel member upon actuation of the coin mechanism to pivotally displace the channel member relative to the support member," which Applicant respectfully submits is not taught or suggested by Aschenbeck, alone or in combination with the cited art, as discussed above in connection with amended Claim 6. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 19 is allowable over Aschenbeck, alone or in combination with the cited art.

New Claims 29 and 30

Applicant has added new independent Claim 29 and new dependent Claim 30, which depends from Claim 29. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 29 and 30 recite features that are not taught or suggested by Aschenbeck, alone or in combination with the cited art, as discussed above in connection with amended Claims 6 and 19. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that new Claim 29 is allowable over Aschenbeck, alone or in combination with the cited art.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance in view of the above remarks. Any remarks in support of patentability of one claim, however, should not be imputed to any other claim, even if similar terminology is used. Additionally, any remarks referring to only a portion of a claim should not be understood to base patentability on that portion; rather, patentability must rest on each claim taken as a whole. Applicant respectfully traverses each of the Examiner's rejections and each of the Examiner's assertions regarding what the prior art shows or teaches, even if not expressly discussed herein. Although amendments have been made, no acquiescence or estoppel is or should be implied thereby. Rather, the amendments are made only to expedite prosecution of the present application, and without prejudice to presentation or assertion, in the future, of claims on the subject matter affected thereby. Applicant also has not presented arguments concerning whether the applied references can be properly combined in view of, among other things, the clearly missing elements noted above, and Applicant reserves the right to later contest whether a proper motivation and suggestion exists to combine these references.

The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney, Josué A. Villalta, at (951) 779-2006 in order to resolve such issues promptly.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued at the earliest opportunity.

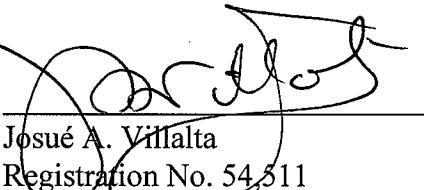
Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

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Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

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By: 

Josué A. Villalta
Registration No. 54,511
Attorney of Record
Customer No. 20,995
(951) 781-9231

AMEND

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